

WHITE POND RECREATIONAL WATER USE ADVISORY UPDATE—August 5, 2015

A public health advisory continues to be in effect for White Pond due to an ongoing bloom of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae). White Pond was sampled by MDPH on Monday August 3. Laboratory analysis showed cyanobacteria levels of 34,000 cells/ml, below the MDPH guideline level of 70,000 cells/ml. Microcystin toxin level was <1 ppb.

According to MDPH guidelines, two samples collected a week apart with levels below the guidelines are required before the advisory should be lifted. This week's results will be considered the first low sample, and MDPH will sample at White Pond again next week.

A notice will be posted on the town's website News and Notices section as soon as the advisory is lifted, and warning signs will be removed from the pond shore.

Remnants of the algae bloom are still visible, and may appear as a mustard-yellow or brown-red-yellow floating scum or oily sheen. Scums of algal cells may be washed up on the shoreline. All should be avoided.

Cyanobacteria blooms may produce toxins that can make pets and people sick.

The Concord Board of Health strongly advises:

- **Do not swim**
- **Do not allow your pet to swim in or drink the water.**
- **Rinse pets and children off immediately if they come into contact with an algae bloom.**
- **Avoid contact with areas of algae concentration- even on shore.**
- **Do not swallow water and be sure to rinse off after contact.**

Background Information

Blue-green algae blooms can produce toxins that can make pets and people sick. Toxins may be present within the algae cells or in the water.

- For humans, the primary concern is ingestion of water containing blue-green algae while swimming. Of secondary concern is direct skin contact with the blue-green algae and inhalation of water droplets containing blue-green algae or toxins.
- For pets, the primary concern is the ingestion of water containing blue-green algae or scum that has washed ashore or gotten onto their skin or fur.

Contact can cause skin and eye irritation, and inhalation can cause respiratory irritation and exacerbate pre-existing respiratory conditions. Toxins are not absorbed through the skin.

Ingestion of blue-green algae can cause acute gastrointestinal symptoms, such as vomiting and diarrhea. If the blue-green algae are producing toxin(s), the health effects can be more serious, especially for small pets due to their smaller body weights. Ingestion of the toxins can cause acute gastrointestinal distress and, depending on the specific toxin, can affect the functioning of the liver, kidneys, and/or neurological systems and in severe cases can result in death.

PETS--Call your vet immediately if your pet has been around an algae bloom and shows symptoms such as vomiting, staggering, drooling, or convulsions. These symptoms present themselves fairly quickly after exposure. Animals of most concern are dogs. They have been known to eat the scum that washes ashore and/or lick scum out of their fur. In Massachusetts and in many other states, canine fatalities have been documented due to the ingestion of harmful algae.

For more information, call the Concord Board of Health at 978 318 3275

| MA Department of Public Health, - US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and US EPA websites provide further information on blue-green algae blooms:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/environmental-health/exposure-topics/beaches-algae/algae-information.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/hab/>

<http://www2.epa.gov/nutrient-policy-data/cyanohabs>